

# THE GREEN CALDRON

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# The Drag Race

JACQUELINE VAVRA

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 2*

"WHO PUT THE MEN IN MENTHOL SMOKING?" "SO fresh and pure . . . ." "Break those chains . . . step up, step up . . . ." "Like a balmy day in the month of May . . . ." "A quarter inch away . . . ." "Extra margin. Extra margin." "Welcome aboard!"

My head is spinning. I gag on my cigarette. Which brand am I smoking? Who knows? Insidious jingles are penetrating my formerly placid mind. I try so hard to ignore the nasty televised cigarette commercials which invade my living room, but I cannot succeed. I glance sheepishly at the T.V. Another one is coming; I can sense it.

She is a beautiful girl. She is the young sophisticate leaning carelessly against the scrubby bark of a spring shower-soaked tree. She is seemingly unconcerned about the grime she is getting on her cashmere co-ordinate outfit from Peck and Peck. After all, it's just another rag.

He is a handsome lad. He is Mr. All American Boy—football hero, country club charmer, young intellectual, and clean-shaven (both face and head) Ivy Leaguer. One would think that when such an ideal male meets such an ideal female and spring is in the air a chemical reaction would occur. However, they barely notice each other. Both are much too concerned with the cigarettes they are smoking.

Romantic music is heard in the background. Both inhale their cigarettes deeply. A tender smile plays around the mouth of the girl. The boy looks peaceful. Each seems to be sharing a special secret with the cigarette he smokes.

I sit by the television set wide-eyed and enraptured. Surely if I smoke this brand I will automatically be provided with expensive clothes, be accompanied by handsome men on lovely walks through the park, and be mentioned regularly in the "They Were There" section of the daily newspaper. May Heaven forgive me, for I swallow this nonsense as a moron would.

Ah, but I'm not the only gullible soul who gets exploited by the cigarette ads on television. My Uncle Mac likes Marlboro because the T. V. ad appeals to him. He is hen-pecked, and he has always secretly wanted a tattoo but is afraid of the pain. Mother smokes Parliament with the recessed filter because if that nasty tobacco is a quarter inch away she can be one of the girls and smoke at bridge club without ruining her health. I would wager that if Plato lived in our time even he would not be able to escape from the "drag race."



Good old Plato would probably be a hacker, too. Before any meaty discourses he would reach into his toga with nicotine stained fingers and take out his package of Viceroy's. Now he could sit down on a marble pillar and truly "think for himself."

Perhaps I seem to be exaggerating, but I feel humiliated when I fall for televised cigarette commercials. I ask if they can possibly be aimed at mature adults, and I always answer no. Then I cringe with shame at my apparent immaturity as I light up one of the brand I have last seen advertised on television.

## Character

JERRY AFRICK

*Rhetoric 102, Theme 2*

CHARACTER, THAT IS, THE CHARACTER OF A HUMAN being, is defined in Webster's *New Collegiate Dictionary* as the sum total of distinctive qualities derived by an individual from nature, education, or habit, and as the moral vigor or firmness acquired through self-discipline.

This definition, clear as it may be, is not very helpful when one wishes to make a relatively precise determination of his own distinctive qualities. What are some of the distinctive qualities for which a person must look, and how does self-discipline fit into the formation of a firm character?

Most of our problems lie not in outer space, but in inner space. It is within ourselves that the issues of life are recognized, considered, and finally resolved. Neither other persons nor events are capable of defeating or destroying us, but we are capable of self-defeat and self-destruction.

It seems curious the way that so many of us limit ourselves. We set ceilings on our capabilities, and often the ceiling is zero. As a consequence, our powers fail to flower, and we push on through life brooding over our deficiencies. Actually, we do not scratch the surface of the possible.

There was a report that when two men left a political campaign rally one of them asked the other, "Well, what do you think now?" The reply was eloquent: "Think? I didn't come here to think. I came to holler."

Unfortunately, it is much easier to holler than it is to think, so when we face the problems of the day, we often exercise our vocal cords far more vigorously than we exercise our brains. But it is better in the long run to

think our way through problems when we first meet them than it is to deal with them after they have been compounded by their waiting for attention.

Nothing worthwhile ever happens in the world until somebody moves himself. It is the rivers that are not crossable that challenge one's ingenuity and lead one to make the impossible possible. It is the mountains that cannot be cut through that inspire one's resolution to do what cannot be done. If we have not been able to move ourselves, maybe it is because we have not given ourselves to anything.

The student who cannot move himself to study has not lost himself in the love of learning. The musician who cannot move himself to practice has not given himself to his music. The designer who cannot make himself design anything has not given himself to his job.

If one has not given himself to something, could it be because rewards are all too frequently realized for a minimum of effort? As often as not, the accomplishment of a superior achievement is looked upon as snobbery, or, it appears sometimes, as the act of a traitor to the cause of being average. Average-ness develops rapidly in the absence of pride, either in an individual, or a family, or a community. Pride—not of conceit or arrogance, but in accomplishment—is a spur, and without it there will never be any getting above the level of the average, a level which always tends to go lower unless it is constantly stimulated.

Just as we have to choose between being average and striving for excellence we find that life is mostly a matter of choosing between opposing alternatives. All of us find ourselves compelled to deal with issues we wish we could avoid. Decision is difficult, and we would be pleased to shift the responsibility to someone else if we could manage it.

There are choices involving honor that sometimes put us to the test. They are unavoidable. We wonder if we can afford to take a stand when we are confronted by business practices that threaten our integrity. Do we dare speak out on a public issue when safety lies in silence? Shall we risk the disapproval of those whose favor can do us a good turn? We wish we could avoid the necessity for deciding.

In the development of a firm character, we have seen that our whole personality depends upon the methods which we use to resolve our daily problems. The placing of unnecessary limits on our capabilities for resolving our problems only hampers creative thinking and causes us to fail to recognize our goal in life. Without a goal or general direction in life, we have no standard basis upon which to resolve conflicting alternatives of life's problems, and we join the ranks of those people who are content with being average.

And yet, it is only by way of difficult choice that we grow in moral and spiritual stature. Greatness in life demands stern issues to test the soul.



# Beads of Sweat

VIOLET JUODAKIS

*Rhetoric 102, Theme 5*

HER DARK BROODING EYES WERE STILL GLASSY FROM sleep and her stomach was audibly protesting against the oily scrap of food called breakfast. Pieces of the tasteless, greasy strings of beef were wedged between her teeth and she made soft sucking noises trying to loosen them.

"Aw, come on, Ma. Can't I stay out 'til supper? Huh, Ma?"

"Well, all right. But mind you, any later than that an' you'll be hearin' from Pa."

"Aw, Ma."

She hurriedly scraped her chair back from the table with a series of short grating sounds and scurried out the creaking door into the dim hallway.

"Land sakes, child! Devil on your tail?"

"Hello, Mrs. Roget. I gotta go."

Oh, yes, she had to go. She could go as far as the farthest star and she would still be too near. In spite of her nineteen years, the brand of a child was still upon her. She was of no worth to herself, much less to anyone else. God, how she wished she knew who she was instead of being a piece of the black, or red, or white rectangular bars drawn by the visiting sociology people to represent the black slum folk.

The torrid sun stretched out its snaky golden arms and slowly coiled around her body deadening all feeling. The moisture within her, like the hatred for her life, was tortuously squeezed out, drop by drop. She did not try to stop the flow with a wipe of her hand, but let the tiny, salty beads trickle down her ebony face. Sliding the tip of her tongue over her upper lip, she caught a few drops which were perched there precariously.

The faded, pink summer dress regained some of its lost color where it clung wetly to her skinny black body. The air was filled with a deathlike hush—a muffled silence that is felt rather than heard. The white folks call this part of town a jungle. It was a black jungle which stifled and imprisoned its black natives. If one was born here, one was expected to die here. Well, she was not one of those helpless prisoners. All she needed was a little courage, just a little courage. Repeating that magic word to herself, she quickened her steps to a rapid click-click-click pace. The uneven rock pavement sped by as she hurried aimlessly down the streets and alleys. Her nose and mouth were filled with the dry, choking soot from the nearby factories. She caught sight of some little boys splashing in a small, steady

stream of water which was spurting from a damaged hydrant. Tiny rivulets escaped from the stream and trickled down to adventure until devoured by greedy holes and crevices. Thrusting her sticky, moist hands under the main force of the stream, she cupped the sparkling liquid into her hands and rubbed it on her sweaty face. She bent over the steady stream and sucked in the invigorating drink noisily. Straightening, she felt refreshed and free for a moment.

Then, slowly, drops of the familiar sweat began to grow and swell, and the old thoughts resumed their familiar places. She saw that the sun was already behind the west buildings. She was late. She'd better hurry back or else Pa would be mad.

## First Love

ELOISE JOHNSON

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 7*

THE LAKE WAS A SMALL ONE, SHAPED LIKE AN IMPERFECT figure eight wearing a tasseled cap, with a belt of broken concrete at its waist marking the division between the old and new reservoirs. On one bank, below the belt, and almost as if dangling from it, was a chain of cottages.

When the lake was built, and before the road was improved, fishermen haphazardly tossed boards together for shelters from summer rains. As progress and wives and families ventured to the lake, the shacks enveloped them all, and amoeba-like, grew a sun porch here, a kitchen there, and finally, with the addition of bedrooms and baths, came to be called cottages.

Our cottage was built on a jutting corner of land at the lake's edge, so that the sleeping porch at the front and the bedroom at the side both faced the water. The kitchen, at the back, faced the road. By the time we moved there, the siding was white clapboard, a mammoth stone fireplace overpowered the living room, and a cramped bathroom lurked behind the kitchen. The windows opened whimsically—up, in, or out. All of the former owners had apparently felt that matching windows were an outlandish extravagance when second-hand would do for a summer picnic spot.

We had only our wedding gifts and some family hand-me-downs to furnish our house. We cooked on a two-burner electric plate at first and kept our perishables in an old ice chest someone had left behind. We sat on the floor of the living room on our new rugs to listen to our radio. When company came, we offered them lawn chairs.



Our working hours were reversed from the normal, so our leisure hours were opposite those of our friends. We rowed along the bank of the lake in the summer dawns, listening for the splash of feeding bass and eavesdropping on the redwings' morning conversation in the cattails. In the fall, we hunted in the fields across the road, our boots leaden with mud. In all the seasons we walked along the lake road, beyond the last of the cottages, to the dam. We had neighbors but we only spoke and smiled and never stopped to chat.

About the time the egrets left for their long flight to Florida, the summer people began their migration. Selfishly, we counted the days until the last of October, when the hardiest could keep snug no longer and fled to civilization and insulation. After they were gone, the lake was truly ours.

The wind would whip the lake to a gray and white froth and sweep the trees bare of all but a clinging leaf or two. One morning we would wake to find the glittering, blinding beauty of a fresh snow. Sometimes, overnight, the lake would freeze. If the wind had been gentle with the newly formed ice, we had a skating rink beside our front porch.

We will move to town soon, we said. We are older now. Then, when our daughter was born, we said we really must look for a house in town. The lake is dangerous and lonely for a very young child. At last, when she was six, we said we must live closer to schools.

On moving day, when the bulging little house had been relieved of the overburden of the years' accumulations and necessities, we lagged behind. We had to see if anything had been forgotten, we said. Maybe a child's toy had been left in a cupboard. We had to look.

We saw each room reflecting a shining welcome to the new owners: In the scrubbed, bare shelves of the cupboards which had appeared where none had been before, in the shiny faces of those contrary windows, and the fireplace hearth, swept clean now. Let them make their own ashes.

As we turned to test the front latch once more, we heard the steady, rhythmic slap of the waves spanking the boards of our pier. From the neighboring tree, we heard the kingfisher's raucous boast of a good catch. Out of a gusty, cloudy sky, we heard the foreign, buoyant cries of only seven whistling swans, not quite extinct. We heard the resounding protest of the ice as it settled to meet the water beneath and we felt the house shudder in sympathy.

We saw the tree down the way that decorated itself in black and gold each year for Halloween. We saw raindrops brailing a line of dots two spaces ahead of storm clouds swooping down the lake. We saw the lacy, fragile designs of mouse tracks in fresh snow.

And echoing over all, the brusque voice of the old man from whom we bought the cottage, saying, "In the storms you will think she is going to blow right in the lake. But she never has, and she never will."



# On "Death"

TIM FLYNN

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 13*

## DEATH

*Death, be not proud, though some have called thee  
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;  
For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow  
Die not, poor Death; nor yet canst thou kill me.  
From Rest and Sleep, which but thy picture be,  
Much pleasure; then from thee much more must flow;  
And soonest our best men with thee do go—  
Rest of their bones and souls' delivery!  
Thou'rt slave to Fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,  
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell;  
And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well  
And better than thy stroke. Why swell'st thou then?  
One short sleep past, we wake eternally,  
And Death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die!*

ON ONE'S FIRST READING OF JOHN DONNE'S HOLY SONNET "Death," the reader is apt to say, "It's different." It is this difference which serves as the beginning of the poem's originality. Donne's approach to his material takes a point of view which is opposite in nature to that which is generally held; his opening words deride Death, maintaining that he is not powerful and ought not to be proud. Instead of treating his subject with dignity and respect, instead of looking at it from a distance, Donne is colloquial and direct, as if he were engaging Death in a very familiar conversation. Such a beginning catches the reader off guard and, by the surprise of its directness, is an excellent attention-securing device. After this beginning there are no more stunts; the poet is in earnest. This earnestness is essential to the poem's conviction, which, emotionally at least, convinces the reader.

Superficially, this poem is quite commonplace. It is an assertion of man's ultimate defeat of Death in immortality. However, there is far more value in this poem as a work of art than in the mere message, ideas, or thoughts of the author. It is true that thoughts are proper constituents of the totality which is a poem. Other things being equal, the more profound the thought, the greater the poem. By "other things being equal," I simply mean that thought does not of itself make the poem; it is only one element in the ultimate fusion which is poetry, not prose. Often poets are deliberately obscure, forgetting or ignoring the obligation to be as clear as possible so that com-

munication between them and their audience may take place. But this can be decided only after every effort has been made to understand. It is well to remember that genuinely complex thought usually requires a complementary complexity of expression.

Although Donne's poem abounds in this complexity of thought and expression, it is a logical, reasoned argument in support of a thesis announced in the opening lines. Such a reasoned argument would suggest prose; Donne turns prose to poetry by dramatizing his material. Although Death is given no opportunity to talk back, the poem is a debate, one side of a debate, rationally worked out point by point.

Let us now make a rather brief analytical critique of the poem's message. John Donne is trying to remove fear from death. The poem is based on the Christian view that an eternal afterlife follows death, that death is merely a transition period, a temporary pause between the two "lives." Since "rest" and "sleep," which are images of Death, give men pleasure, Death, the reality, must give men more. Therefore, there is nothing to be dreaded about Death. Since the best men go with Death most readily, an idea which is possibly an intentional variation of the popular saying, "The good die young," there can be nothing terrible about Death. Since Death is a slave to "Fate, Chance, Kings and desperate men" and is associated with unpleasant things like poison, war, and sickness, it has nothing to be proud of in the company it regularly keeps. Since drugs can produce sleep as well as Death, there is nothing in particular to be dreaded in Death, nothing peculiar to its power.

After a brief elaboration on the general sonnet form which Donne has followed, it will become evident that this form is essential to the development and theme of this poem. A sonnet is a fourteen-line poem in which a conventional pattern is used to give added weight to the thought and feeling. Donne's "Death" is a characteristic example of the English sonnet. The general form is three quatrains followed by a couplet with the major division in emphasis coming at the end of the twelfth line. The concluding couplet is a dramatic climax, an intense and concentrated statement of the "point" of the whole poem, a summing-up of the consequences of what has been presented. Here the poet focuses the application of the experience developed in the three quatrains, criticizes, modifies, or expands it, and at once unifies and evaluates the experience out of which the sonnet is made.

Looking back, one begins to see the unique relation of this sonnet structure to the thematic content. First the dogmatic statement, "Death, be not proud"; secondly, an enumeration of reasons why Death has small ground for pride; finally, the last lines themselves rise to a climax of their own in the paradoxical phrase, "Death, thou shalt die," the final word on the whole matter. The entire poem is a figure, basically a metaphor, with Death compared to a person. It is this extended personification of Death which makes this caricature, this exaggeration of the mildness of Death, extremely realistic.



# Places of Pleasure

JANE LEWIS

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 13*

ONE NIGHT, BECAUSE WE HAD NOTHING BETTER TO DO, my roommate and another girl and I hopped in the car and set off for a grand tour of the campus "joints." On my journey I found neither dens of iniquity nor glimpses of a promised land, but merely the mildly amusing sequence of scenes I had expected. I say amusing, for nothing is more a point of gentle laughter than a child; no one can help smiling when he see a youngster mimicking the ludicrous actions of his elders in all seriousness; and at every place I went I saw children playing at being adults.

I saw children smoking in every way they had ever seen: in a nervous, endless chain; languidly as Cleopatra; in the fashion of underworld characters; or with a pseudo-sophisticated flick of the wrist.

I saw children talking in every tone imaginable: boisterously, pretentiously in earnest, in the manner of men and women of the world, or with an air of boredom.

I saw children drinking beer: they drank it from bottles, from glasses, from pitchers; they sipped it, they gulped it, they studied it; they adored it.

And all the time I felt I was in a land of Lilliputians with everything built to size: there were small rooms, cozy seats, tiny bottles, pint-sized ash trays, baby-faced proprietors, and little boy waiters. What could be more charming! And yet after a few moments of amusement I found myself becoming absolutely bored.

Not once did I see any one of these imitation cosmopolitans smoking for the sheer pleasure of it, talking because he had something to say, or drinking because he liked beer. Rather, they all gave me the impression that they had come, had sat, had smoked, had talked, had drunk, and were waiting for the enchanted words to be spoken and the magic dust sprinkled on their curly little heads and the wonderful miracle of "having a good time" to occur. I could see it running through their minds: "Adults can do what they want; this is what they do, so it must be fun."

My feeling of boredom melted to pity and I felt moved to cry out in a ringing voice with dramatic pauses—"Unhappy generation! You are right in your unhappiness. Your pleasures are not dictated to you. There is more joy to living than this. Rise up! Go forth!"—when suddenly it occurred to me that perhaps I was the odd personality, unable to enjoy standard entertainment. Maybe they were really having a good time.

In a cloud of uncertainty I followed my friends back to the dorm and got into the shower, the only place where my powers of reasoning function properly, and began to talk to myself.

"Jane," I said, "you have smoked L & M, Lucky Strike, Viceroy, Marlboro, Winston, Kentucky Brand, Camel, Chesterfield, and homemade cigarettes. You have talked to priests, psychiatrists, businessmen, teachers, teenagers, Chinese, Czechoslovakians, Japanese, Hawaiians, Germans, Hungarians, Swedish, English, and Americans about life, death, philosophy, sex, politics, morals, religion, and the future of America. You have drunk whiskey, vodka, rum, gin, vermouth, champagne, and your father's wine in bedrooms, barrooms, bathrooms, bowling alleys, basements, cocktail lounges, cars and swimming pools. Have or have not all these things been fun?"

"Yes," I sighed, remembering.

"And have you or have you not enjoyed, along with smoking, jabbering, and drinking, the pleasures of reading, listening to music, watching plays, and praying on your knees to a hidden God?"

"I have," I replied, beginning to see the light.

"Then what right have you to laugh at, sneer at, pity, or judge the people you saw in the places you went to tonight?"

"No right at all," I whispered, scrubbing my ears.

But as I turned on the cold water all my confidence and defiance came back to me and "There was something sad and wrong in those places!" I cried to my departing self.

## The Process of Natural Selection

PHILIP G. PLOTICA

*Rhetoric 102, Theme 6*

THE OCCURRENCE OF ORGANIC EVOLUTION IS A FACT that has been accepted by men of science for hundreds of years. Many of the famous Greek scientists and philosophers, Empedocles, Thales, and Aristotle, for example, noticed this phenomenon in the world around them and studied it. But although the fact of evolution was readily accepted by most learned men, explanations concerning the method of evolution were not. Men knew that organic evolution had occurred and was occurring, but they did not know exactly how. Many theories were offered, some ridiculous and others not so ridiculous. For a while, the scientific world accepted the hypothesis of the French zoologist, Jean Baptise de Lamarck, which involved the inheritance of acquired somatic (body) characteristics. This theory, although totally incorrect, did provide neat explanations of many observable phenomena and hence was quite popular. In 1859, however, the British naturalist, Charles Darwin, after several years of intensive study on this subject, published his *On the Origin of the Species by Means of Natural*



*Selection.* Since that time, the concept of natural selection has been accepted as a valid scientific law.

For convenience in description, the process of natural selection can be divided into four major steps, the first being *genetic variation*. No two organisms, regardless of how closely they are related, possess identical genetic compositions (genotypes). Also, due to various chemical and physical factors, there often occur abnormal changes in the individual genes, the expressions of which are called mutations. Such changes constantly occur both in man and in lower animals, but for the most part are insignificant and go unnoticed. Occasionally, however, a mutation occurs which either seriously hinders or greatly aids the animal in his quest for survival. These mutations serve to trigger the process of natural selection.

The second step in this process is *overpopulation*. As Malthus pointed out in 1838, many more animals, man included, are produced than the environment can support. Thus, as the population "explodes," the food supply remains practically constant and soon there is simply not enough to go around. Pressure is created, and something must be done then to relieve it.

The tremendous pressure created by overpopulation inevitably leads to *competition*, the third step in natural selection. If there is only one piece of food or one suitable habitat available and two animals desire it, then it is obvious what must happen. The two may argue, bargain, fight, or do whatever else is appropriate for their kind, but the end result will be the same: one will win and one will lose.

When such competition for survival occurs, and it constantly does occur, the fourth aspect of natural selection becomes important: *the differential ability of a genotype to survive and reproduce*. If mutations are constantly occurring, it follows that certain animals will be mutants for desirable traits, while others will be mutants for undesirable traits. In most cases, the mutants with undesirable traits will not be able to compete successfully with the other animals in their environment. They will be selected for extinction and will not live to reproduce and pass on their unsuccessful genotype. The successful mutants, however, will thrive, reproduce, and transmit their desirable traits to future generations. By this means natural selection occurs.

The simplicity of natural selection can be demonstrated by considering a typical example, the evolution of long-necked giraffes. We can assume that, at one time, giraffes possessed short necks, and then a mutation for a long neck occurred. We can also assume that there developed overpopulation and competition for survival. While the short-necked giraffes were forced to feed on the meager foliage at the lower levels, the long-necked mutants feasted on the upper parts of the trees. While the short-necks starved to death, the long-necks flourished and reproduced. After a long time, the short-necked giraffes became extinct and only the long-necked variety remained. Evolution had occurred, and the method was natural selection.

# Definition of Early Spring

VALERIE LAWRENCE

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 3*

THE GRAY LEAVES OF THE SHATTERED WINTER STRODE man-like with the wind down the wet pavement. They did not move with the confidence of complete victory—rather as tired bleeding soldiers dragging themselves off the field. No one stopped them with annoyed glances and rusted rakes: people give up too easily. Or, perhaps, people don't feel comfortable in a cleanly-swept world.

The leaves continued their human step; touching the pavement heavily, lifting one side, and thrusting themselves forward again: not without pain, but cleanly. Fragile, they were not. But they were delicate in their way; perhaps they had the sensitivity born of experience.

The sky was a soft gray, unruffled as the breast of a preened dove. Wet streets were all, though; no fresh drops fell. The leaves swished in swirling eddies about the boys in corduroy slacks. With every step the boys took, the slacks creaked like large-toothed saws drawn through a tall gray pine. The leaves kept pace with the boys, stopped with them at the top of the hill, and looked down. No car splashed past them, and they stood silently for a very long time.

Below, where the dull highway slithered its winding path through the fertile land, and again, across, where the gray pavement marched precisely up the opposite hill, the soil stood black and ready. And the boys watched as the red tractors appeared from their sheds suddenly, after-births of spring. High up on that hill opposite them, where the wet highway turned suddenly right and then continued its steady steep climb, a meadow sprawled. In it white fingers of melting snow on blue-veined rocks waved a sad good-bye. But there was no sun to hasten that hand's slow death.

The boys did not seem to notice: it was too cold for kite flying. Besides, the scene held them with the singular fascination of a thing primeval; no little lame balloon-man here—only a cold gray picture of something ancient and half-forgotten.

Yet that feeling of eternity—of all ages in a moment—stretched forward, too: there was expectancy mingled in its fibers. But there was no immediacy in the expectancy, and the smudgy atmosphere of death did not envelop the boys and leaves, but let them go.

Leaves do not stand forever poised on the top of a hill. Thus, the sound of their strange tread did not startle, or even interest, the boys. Down the highway the leaves tumbled until they lay very still in a puddle which glittered



in the headlights of an approaching car. The boys watched the car move towards them, its beams probing the dark before it with nebulous antennae. The car passed them. The boys did not throw snowballs after it.

## People Watching

WAYNE W. CROUCH

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 7*

THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES SEEM TO BE VERY susceptible to fads and crazes. One of the more lasting ones has been hobbies. It seems that anyone not having a hobby is considered abnormal; as I have a strong desire to be considered normal, I have worked quite hard to find a suitable hobby. It is debatable whether or not I have found a *suitable* one, but at least I have a hobby. It is "people watching." Please don't laugh. It is really quite interesting. Even during the short time that I have pursued this watching game, I have learned to classify people by their actions. For instance, three very interesting types can be found at an hour exam. The chemistry hour exam I attended last week offers good examples.

When I walked into the room, a member of the first species (the "Nervous Crammer") was already performing excellently. Sitting on the edge of his seat, he was rapidly surveying each page of his notes. His hands had a tendency to shake, and he kept reaching for a cigarette. Each time, however, remembering he could not smoke in the classroom, he had to settle for chewing his nails.

Past experiences with this type have convinced me that he does little to prepare for a test until a few days before it. His theory might well be that if one studies the material too early, he will forget most of it by test time. Therefore, the last few days—particularly the last few minutes—are sufficient to get all the information fresh in one's mind. However, his nervousness makes it quite apparent that he does not believe wholeheartedly in his system. Although he may succeed on this test by cramming, in my opinion, he is simply too lazy to study day by day and is by far the most irresponsible species.

Having tired of N.C. ("Nervous Crammer"), I was impatiently awaiting the arrival of some "Jabber-Crammers." Several of this species would undoubtedly be the next to arrive because they are always at least twenty minutes early. At last the door opened, and in walked *one* J.C. I was shocked! I had never seen one alone before. The outstanding identifying

characteristic of the J.C.'s is that they like to discuss among themselves everything mentioned in the preceding lectures, and one can't very well do this by himself. I had assumed that a J.C. by himself was like a fish out of water. However, before he could flounder around very much, several more J.C.'s entered, and soon they were all engrossed in confusing each other with an array of unrelated facts.

The motives of the J.C.'s differ. Some interject a question into the discussion in order to get an answer that they do not know. If they are lucky enough to get a correct answer that they can understand, they might profit. However, the answer is generally either partly wrong or told by several people at the same time but in different ways, and it is nearly impossible to get straight in one's mind an answer suitable to put on a test. The second motive is used largely by a J.C. to lift his own spirits. He asks questions to which only he knows the answers. In the guise of testing a fellow J.C., he is actually building his ego with each unanswerable question he can contrive.

Ten minutes before the bell the J.C.'s were producing a loud hum, and the N.C.'s were still nervously flipping pages. Members of the third and final species began to arrive.

They came in singles only, carrying nothing but a slide rule (a big one in a leather case) and a pencil. I call them "Calm Perfectionists." Although there are two types, the one who knows the material and the one who does not, their demeanors are the same. Both put on such a show that their true inner qualities cannot be recognized. Their main interest is in giving the impression that they are intelligent. They appear perfectly confident of their ability to pass the test and indifferent to questions asked by the J.C.'s. Although they seem to try to control their smarter-than-thou attitude, a little bit leaks out, and one can always catch them giving an N.C. a scornful glance. Some students look up to these impassive, confident students, but most see them for what they are—attention seekers.

With only two minutes left before the bell, the proctor forced the N.C.'s to put their notes under the desk and the J.C.'s to stop talking. The C.P.'s smiled confidently and ceremoniously placed their slide rules within easy reach as the tests were passed out. As the hour progressed, the species faded until they were no longer distinguishable. Every student—N.C., J.C., or C.P.—was silently bent over his paper. Likewise, one could not distinguish between the species by the test grades. Any score was likely to belong to any species.

Thus ended another day of "people watching." Although some people may not agree with my classifications, I am not concerned. The beauty of the hobby is its individuality: one need satisfy only himself. The important thing is to participate, not to conform. If by an objectionable classification, I have succeeded in drawing a person into the "society of people watchers," I am happy.



# Relativity

SYLVIA PIKELIS

*Rhetoric 102, Theme 11*

IS IT NOT STRANGE HOW A HUMAN MIND CAN SOMETIMES become passionately obsessed with some small, insignificant detail that soon manages to dwarf all other thoughts and to imprison and bind the mind with an almost unbreakable knot? Perhaps this is one of those proverbial "thin lines" which separate the sane from the insane—this ability to become obsessed with a detail, to become engrossed with the fate of a speck of dust, the fate of a tiny ant, or, as it was in my case, the fate of a growing flower.

Strange that I, or anyone else, for that matter, should have noticed it to begin with, but somehow, as my gaze slid over the scene, it came to rest on, and instantaneously become attached to, the stone—not so much to the stone as to what was beneath it. It was a heavy, foreboding stone, and at its side, in fact almost underneath it, was a tiny, wretched plant. It is hard to explain, perhaps even impossible, but somehow, somehow, compassion filled my entire being, compassion for this minute part of an immense thing called Life. How cruel fate had been to the unfortunate seed to have placed it there! How fruitless and futile any effort to grow! It would never survive. It was almost beyond belief that it had managed to grow even this much. Certainly it would never achieve the destiny that was its birthright. The promise of the blood-red beauty which the single bud stubbornly held would never be fulfilled.

Though strangely saddened, I could not help being fascinated by this plant's apparent refusal to die in spite of all the overwhelming odds. I followed the progress of the plant for days, and I must admit that I sometimes watched it for hours on end, completely oblivious to time—completely oblivious to everything but that struggling bit of life. I had no hope for it, for what hope could there be for a plant whose roots were so intimately a part of, so completely caught and nourished by, a cold, gray stone—a stone that even hindered the rays of the life-giving sun from reaching that withering growth. I had no hope, and yet the plant, defiant in its struggle to grow, persistent in its claim on life, continued to astound me with its amazing durability.

It would survive only a few more days at the most. A feeling of anxiety overcame me; I had become one with that plant, and thus, in some strange way, the hopelessness and futility of its existence became the hopelessness and futility of mine. Its fate became intertwined with mine, and it soon became impossible for me to tell one from the other. I had no hope for the plant,

and, similarly, I lost hope for myself. Each time I visited the plant, it was with increasing fear and sorrow. The end, I felt, was drawing near, and I could do nothing to stop it.

It was dusk. A strange sensation had begun to fill me. Perhaps this would be the last time. I felt that it would. In a few minutes the sun would be setting. I walked slowly. All at once I felt the splendour of the sunset. Almost afraid, I turned to look at it.

The blood-red brilliance of the setting sun had united with the blood-red beauty of the magnificent flower, and, for one instant, all three were as one—all painted by the same artist in one magnificent stroke. All three were as one—the sunset, the flower, and the tombstone.

That was the last time I saw it.

## My Name Is Gone

KAREN McCLALLEN

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 2*

MY IDENTITY IS A THING OF THE PAST. I ONCE thought that I was an individual with unique characteristics; now I discover that I am merely a number among thousands.

Pre-registration was the first fatal step. When I arrived at my advisor's office, he gave me a stack of I.B.M. cards. These cards required only my number, not my name; henceforward, the University of Illinois would know me as 333536.

The next step was registration itself. When I entered the Armory, my cards were carefully checked to make certain that my identification number was on each one. The registrars also checked my identification number, but they were more considerate; they wrote my name in a section. "Here," I thought, "is hope. The University of Illinois does care." But no, the name was for the convenience of my instructors. (After all, it is awkward calling one by his number.)

My registration completed and my bills paid, I stood in front of a camera. A man said, "Do you see your eyes in the mirror?" Then click, and my identification card was on its way. I was then given a tuberculosis patch test and told to come to the ice rink in two days to get the results and my identification card.

The two days passed. I went to the ice rink and presented my last I.B.M. card. "Station three on the right, Miss," said an impressive looking senior. My test was checked. "Negative," a voice said. "Go straight ahead to station

one, where you will receive your identification card." I went. Again I presented my last dog-eared I.B.M. card. "Hmmm, 333536—here it is." The final step was complete.

Now my name is gone. Of course, a few friends still refer to me as Karen; and I am told that after college my name will be returned, but I doubt it.

## A Series of Paradoxes

JEAN ULRICH

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 12*

HEMINGWAY'S *THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA* APPEARS simple in its grammatical construction, prose style, and development of the main character's personality. Upon close examination, however, the reader finds that the book actually contains a series of paradoxes climaxed by an incident of cruel irony. These paradoxes center around the character of Santiago, whose own personality incorporates several related paradoxes.

"He was an old man who fished alone in a skiff on the Gulf Stream." These sparse lines introduce the reader to the character Santiago, portraying him as a solitary figure. Even the choice of words in this quotation conveys the idea of loneliness. The words "an old man alone" immediately bring a response of sympathy within the reader. "Alone in a skiff on the Gulf Stream": the mental image created by these words—that of a small, frail skiff bobbing forlornly in a vast, watery expanse—increases the reader's awareness of the old man's solitude.

Throughout the book, Santiago's loneliness in a world full of people, on the sea, and in his struggle with the huge and powerful marlin is expressed and re-emphasized. Reading more carefully, however, the reader observes that the old man is not alone. "He was fond of the flying fish, as they were his principal friends on the ocean. . . . He always thought of the sea . . . as feminine." He called her "la mar," and he even talked to her and to the great fish that was pulling him further and further from the safety of land; and he talked to his hand when it became cramped and would not move, and he talked out loud to some unseen, but apparently felt, presence. Not once in the course of his struggle with the marlin did he express any sign of loneliness—because he did not feel alone. The impression of solitude is conveyed to the reader by the circumstances which surround Santiago and by Hemingway's stark but vivid prose.



Hemingway depicts Santiago as a simple, basic personality, a man with a great humility. In Santiago's every action, before and after his struggle with the marlin, there is an aura of simplicity, humility and child-like innocence. He delights in the wonders of nature and in the hard, but fascinating life of the sea. His outlook on life is also simple. He lives a day-to-day existence, never concerning himself with the problems of yesterday or tomorrow. "He was too simple to wonder when he had attained humility [but] he knew it was not a disgrace, and it carried no loss of true pride." His simplicity and humility become apparent in his actions and speeches. His train of thought (the narrative of the book) strengthens the reader's awareness of his piety. His terse but capable meeting of the emergencies that arise and his refusal to allow anything to disturb his calm outlook on life also convey an impression of simple integrity.

Despite Santiago's humility, however, he is still an extremely proud man. In one respect his pride is not arrogant or self-assertive, but is the personal pride of every man who establishes for himself certain principles and adheres to them. However, he also has a somewhat conceited pride in his strength, which he has not lost in his old age, and in his cleverness and calmness in handling the marlin. "They called him The Champion . . . . He decided that he could beat anyone if he wanted to badly enough . . ." Santiago recalls the "hand game with the great negro from Cienfuegos who was the strongest man on the docks," and his pride becomes more obvious to the reader. That he is proud is even more obvious in the following lines. "I hate a cramp . . . . It is humiliating before others to have a diarrhea . . . but a cramp . . . humiliates oneself especially when one is alone." He is "humiliated" by the failure of his body when he needs its strength. "I wish I could show him what sort of a man I am." Santiago in these lines wishes to show the fish that he is a strong man so that the fish will know he is beaten by Santiago's "will . . . and intelligence." When he remembers the cramp, however, he changes his mind. "But then he would see the cramped hand. Let him think I am more man than I am. . . ." "I told the boy I was a strong old man. Now . . . I must prove it." In this short quotation lies the whole reason for the fight with the marlin. He feels that he must prove himself to the boy, to the other fisherman, but, most of all, to himself. Behind this drive is his pride, which he feels he will lose if the fish gets the better of him.

When Santiago has finally "beaten" the fish and is taking him home, the sharks, attracted by the blood in the water, attack the beautiful marlin and completely devour it. When he finally reaches his tiny village harbor, there is nothing left of the great fish except a huge skeleton which proves that he has caught the fish. The old man has showed the boy that he is still a good man and he has proved it to himself, but there is very little pride in it for him. There is only a feeling of bitter defeat.

# Nihilistic Pessimism as Exemplified in the Dialogue Structure of Samuel Beckett's *Endgame*

MICHAEL BURNETT

*Rhetoric 102, Theme 11*

FORM IS AN INTRINSIC PART OF ART. THE STRUCTURE of expression has inherent in it many manifestations of the artistic genius which created it. Form is especially important in poetry, for the value of verse lies in its condensed expression of experience. Poetry consists of clusters of words, not systems of thought. All creative expression, however, is dependent upon structural form. An artist, even an artist of the romantic or overflowing-fountain school is, in selecting words and arranging phrases, imparting a certain structure to his work. This structure, being a conscious artifice chosen in relation to the work, will harmonize with the mood, the idea, and even the meaning of the work and will, if chosen well, become so much a part of the work that it is inseparable from its unique value.

In analyzing a work of art one can, then, interpret meaning, mood, and development through careful analysis of structure. Some artists are intensely aware of form, and direct most of their creative energy towards structural perfection. Flaubert, for example, wished to write a novel about nothing, a work which would allow all his genius to concentrate on expression. Once, when questioned about an ambiguity in one of his works, he replied, "*Tant pis pour le sens, le rythme avant tout!*"<sup>1</sup>

Samuel Beckett, idol of the modern *avant-garde* might well have written this phrase. Often criticized for ambiguity and obscurity in his works, Beckett remains positive in his affirmation of Flaubert's credo. "The quality of language is more important than any system of ethics or esthetics . . . form is the concretion of content, the revelation of a world."<sup>2</sup> In approaching Beckett's works, an analytical study of technique is thus justified.

Beckett's *Endgame*, following his controversial, yet widely-acclaimed *Waiting for Godot*, disappointed the critics. Few praised it; most damned it. T. C. Worsley called it ". . . inverted explorations of the seamier side of Mr. Beckett's nasty unconscious."<sup>3</sup> Alan Brien called Beckett's works ". . . exercises in peevish despair,"<sup>4</sup> and said of Beckett "as the flood waters rise he burns his bridges, scuttles his boats, punctures his waterwings and tries to forget how to swim."<sup>5</sup> All critics who panned the play attacked it on the grounds of its incomprehensibility. Most maintained that Beckett has become

so immersed in self that *Endgame* becomes simply a compilation of private symbols: a *Finnegan's Wake* following a more public-symboled *Ulysses*.

*Endgame* is less happy, less active than *Waiting for Godot*. It is uglier, more bitter, and crueler. *Godot* had much more humor, much more opportunity for Bert Lahr-esque (he played in the original U.S. production) burlesque. The stage was open, and even supported a tree (dead, of course). The two bums were lovable, pitiable—real. Only the entrance of Pozzo and Lucky, the tyrant and the slave, aroused our disgust. In following his conception of the world to its logical outcome, Beckett has made Pozzo and Lucky the main characters of *Endgame*, put them in a bleak brick room, and removed the tree. Pozzo the tyrant, rechristened Hamm, is blind and crippled. He sits pettishly in his wheelchair, wrapped in blood-soaked rags, and attended by the moronic Lucky, here called Clov. Besides the wheelchair, the only objects on stage are two ash cans in which, legless, resting on sand and refuse, reside Hamm's parents. Two windows, one on each side of the back wall, are the only contacts with the outside world. The room is referred to as "the shelter,"<sup>6</sup> and we are told that "Outside of here it's death."<sup>7</sup> The four on stage are the last humans on earth. Beckett has framed the bleakest, cruelest situation possible.

Only the lines save the play from being a bleak cry of despair. Tinged with irony, sarcasm, and even human compassion, they are masterpieces of savage dialogue. The play, though written in prose, has the same effect, the same immediacy, as poetry. "Beckett's prose comes from the same imaginative fount that his early poems do; the later prose is far better than the poems, but it is prose written as poems are written, conveying emotion directly to the reader."<sup>8</sup>

The prose of *Endgame* could not be called beautiful; it has no lyricism, no pronounced cadence. Yet the reader immediately feels a strong emotion, a mixture of pity, disgust, and compassion. The prose is clear, simple English—there are no striking images—yet the poetic effect of the lines is very immediate. Here are the first three lines of the play:

Clov (fixed gaze, tonelessly):

Finished, it's finished, nearly finished, it must be nearly finished.

(Pause.)

Grain upon grain, one by one, and one day, suddenly, there's a heap, a little heap, the impossible heap.

(Pause)

I can't be punished any more.<sup>9</sup>

These lines are representative of a technique Beckett uses all through the play, so a detailed analysis of them will reveal the development of many scenes. The play in its entirety is both a commentary on, and an approximation of, the modern world condition. Thus the dialogue resembles the confused language of modern man and, in doing so, comments on his condition.



The main dialogue technique used in the play is a sort of structural irony. Elevated ideas, emotions, or theories are raised, meditated upon, and dropped as they conflict with debased reality. *Time* magazine mimicked this technique in what it puckishly called "Neo-Cartesian" logic. "I cannot think and do not know, therefore I am—or am I?"<sup>10</sup> The first lines of the play illustrate the structural irony which *Time* mimicked.

Clov begins in a mood of positive finality; there is a glory, an exaltation in his first word, "Finished." He is one of the last humans and is able to say with finality, "The world is finished, the whole mess is finally over." He then feels that he must qualify the statement, so he adds the weak word *it's*. "It's finished" seems somehow lessened by the qualifier; the two words seem less powerful and positive than the single word. Yet the phrase is still definite, still carries conviction. Clov feels, however, that he has overstepped himself. The world isn't really finished; he was foolish to say so. "Nearly finished," he apologizes, and immediately his whole conviction leaves him. He really doesn't know about the world, how *could* he know? It may drag on for years, yet. He shouldn't have started the line anyway; he'd just as soon the whole play was ended right there, that he'd never begun the play at all. In one last desperate attempt to regain authority he bursts out, "It must be nearly finished," and his composure leaves him. There is a long pause, while he convinces himself that he should try to continue the play and not just give the whole thing up. He decides to try again, with the air of a man who has just told a joke, receives no response, and again desperately attempts to win his audience. He sustains his attitude of command through the first few words by blurting them out at a rapid speed. "Grain upon grain, one by one, and one day, suddenly, there's a heap," he races, then runs out of energy. He realizes his pitiable condition and must concede that it's really "a little heap." Utterly demolished, now, he is overwhelmed by the depravity of his condition and mutters "the impossible heap." Finally, in a note of defeat and despair, he pleads "I can't be punished any more." He says they can't punish him any more, that no one could have that much cruelty, but he really doesn't believe it. He announces that he is going to leave the stage, that he is going to his kitchen (to look at the wall); he waits to see if his announcement will have any effect on the world—it doesn't, of course—and, very dejected, he shuffles off.

Here, in three lines, we have a world of humanity. (Note: my description is the way *I* would act the lines—I haven't seen a production of the play, so I may be wrong.) There is irony in man's exalting in his depraved condition. There is irony in the contrast of his sublime beliefs with mundane reality. Finally, there is irony in the structure of his language, with its fall from the sublime to the ridiculous. This structural irony is exploited fully in *Endgame*. From the rise and fall of each phrase, to the rise and fall of the whole piece, irony is laid on irony, incongruity on incongruity, so that the play becomes

a profoundly human yet intensely nihilistic and pessimistic comment on the empty condition of the world.

Often, this structural irony is enhanced by a lack of awareness on the part of the characters. Thus, in some of the cruelest lines in the play (art of this type—social criticism—must be cruel to be heard) the characters are unaware of the horror they are speaking:

Hamm:

Sit on him!

Clov:

I can't sit.

Hamm:

True. And I can't stand.

Clov:

So it is.

Hamm:

Every man his speciality.<sup>11</sup>

Hamm is proud of the hideous condition he is in, and speaks in a platitude that has tremendous ironic impact in this "Age of Specialization." Again, in another line, a common platitude—nature hasn't forgotten us—is inverted and becomes (without the character's knowing it) ironically deformed:

Hamm:

Clov!

Clov:

Yes.

Hamm:

Nature has forgotten us.

Clov:

There's no more nature.

Hamm:

No more nature! You exaggerate.

Clov:

In the vicinity.

Hamm:

But we breathe, we change! We lose our hair, our teeth! Our bloom! Our ideals!

Clov:

Then she hasn't forgotten us.<sup>12</sup>

The irony of the play arises not only in the structure and development of phrases, but also in the choice of words—the structural bricks from which the play is made. Clov, in looking out of one of the two windows, thinks he sees a boy. This is, of course, impossible, since the people on stage are the only humans left, yet Clov believes it was not his imagination. Fearing

that, with another human in the world, the whole race might start all over again, he takes a gaff and starts to go outside and kill the child. Hamm stops him.

Hamm:

NO!

(Clov halts.)

Clov:

No? A potential procreator?

Hamm:

If he exists he'll die there or he'll come here. And if he doesn't . . .

(Pause.)

Clov:

You don't believe me? You think I'm inventing?

(Pause.)

Hamm:

It's the end, Clov. We've come to the end. I don't need you any more.<sup>13</sup>

The unusual words in this quote are, of course, "A potential procreator." It is the end of the world, the end of the human race. A child, a small boy, is seen by two old, impotent men from inside a shelter, outside of which is death. This last bit of life, this final hope is called, without any tenderness, pity, or compassion, in purely denotative words, "A potential procreator." Coming as they do, near the end of the play, these words have an extreme ironic impact. Man rejects and scientifically catalogues the one thing that might have saved him. After the vision of the child (we never know if it existed), the play ends, the world ends—and it ends, as we would expect, 'not with a bang but a whimper,' for Hamm and Clov do not die. Instead, they remain unchanged on stage, and Beckett ingeniously places them in exactly the same tableau with which they opened the play. Thus we have, in the last scene of the play, a remarkable and, since Beckett is a very careful and conscious craftsman, deliberate parallel with the first scene and, more particularly, with the first line of the play. At the beginning of the play, the only definite and positive thing we know is that it is the end of the world, that the people on stage are the last humans extant. As the play progresses with its small exaltations and disappointing perceptions of reality, we begin to realize that the characters don't know it is the end, that actually Hamm and Clov have been in the same condition for hundreds of years. Finally, in the last scene, we realize that Hamm and Clov will *remain* in the same state for hundreds of years to come, for they are man at any time, any place. We realize, too, that *Endgame* is built on a fantastic and subtle structural foundation, one in which each small, seemingly-unrelated part is interrelated with each other part in the same structural way as the whole is developed. The mortar is disillusionment, disappointment, and bitter irony; the bricks are



concepts, ideals and conventions; and the edifice is a profound comment on the modern world condition.

The irony of the play is bitter, pitiless. Beckett describes a world where men are indecisive, lost, a decayed world where the body and all its functions are perverted, and the mind is non-existent; a world where bigotry, cruelty, pettishness, and selfishness are universal qualities; a world of people who can't communicate with one another, who don't want to communicate with one another, and who use other people solely for their selfish, tyrannical ends; a world where art, convention, family loyalty, religion, the body, the mind, country, beauty, and even self-preservation are worthless. The ultimate irony is that the people that inhabit this world either are unaware of their condition, or, if they realize their state, take a perverse satisfaction in it.

Thus the whole structure of the play is ironic. Clov and Hamm use elaborate language, seriously discuss matters of no importance while ignoring those of supreme importance, take delight in the empty and are disgusted by the valuable, yet, all the while, know nothing of the incongruity of their actions in relation to their condition. The world Beckett describes he calls our world; we are the people he paints.

The reasons for critical dislike of the play are many. It is a difficult play to watch. It, as it must to be effective as a social criticism, exaggerates the modern condition to such an extent that the audience leaves with a foul taste in its mouth, a deep depression rather than the elation it expects from the theater. It is hard to take, too, because one has the uncomfortable feeling that it approaches the truth, and one shies away from identifying oneself with Hamm or Clov.

But the main reason for the general dislike of the play is, paradoxically, the form itself. It is a delicate play, one which, unless acted perfectly, fails to communicate to the audience. The careful dialogue structure, the delicate irony, and the poetic form, are missed in a single performance. This apparent obscurity is justifiable. The play is poetry, and as such it should be read and re-read. As is good poetry, one finds something new on each reading and one's appreciation increases. Poetry is condensed. Only by repeated readings can the value of its images, its irony, its rhythm, its meaning, and, finally, its poetic structure, be realized.

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> "Hang the sense; rhythm before all!"—A saying commonly credited to him, quoted here from a footnote to Flaubert's "Un Coeur Simple," in Morris Bishop, *A Survey of French Literature* (New York, 1955), p. 198.

<sup>2</sup> From Samuel Beckett's *Proust*, as quoted in Kenneth Rexroth, "The Point is Irrelevance," *Nation*, CLXXXII (April, 1956), 325-328.

<sup>3</sup> "Private Worlds and Public," *New Statesman*, LVI (November, 1958), 630.

<sup>4</sup> "Waiting for Beckett," *Spectator*, CCI (November, 1958), 609.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Samuel Beckett, *Endgame* (New York, 1958), p. 3.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>8</sup> Horace Gregory, "Beckett's Dying Gladiators," *Commonweal*, LXV (October, 1956), 88-92.

<sup>9</sup> Beckett, *Endgame*, p. 1.

<sup>10</sup> Editors, "Molten Gloom," *Time*, CXVIII (October, 1956), 118.

<sup>11</sup> Beckett, *Endgame*, p. 10.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78.

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# The Patriot and the Chauvinist

DON SHELLHAMER

*Rhetoric 102, Theme 11*

THE PATRIOT IS A LOVER OF HIS COUNTRY. HIS LOVE is a love governed by reason, and his actions are the offspring of wisdom. In his actions, the patriot does much for his country. He defends its ideals, protects its interests, upholds its laws, and encourages those actions which will bring to its government the greatest stability. The actions of the patriot are inherently slow and careful, and therefore rarely give evidence of a sudden or violent nature. Usually the patriot shows his love only to a limited extent. His love is like an iceberg—it shows only a

small part of its size above the surface. The patriot is slow to anger, and his anger is only a result of unforgivable outrages committed against his country.

The chauvinist, too, is a lover of his country, but his love is not like the patriot's love. His love is a blind love, groping in darkness for its meaning. His love is a love governed by pugnacity, and his actions are the offspring of chaos. His goals are similar to the patriot's, but he travels a different road to these goals. The road he travels is different because his love is different. His love is blind. This is the dangerous characteristic of the chauvinist's love—its blindness. Blind love cannot look at reason and thus cannot judge the rightness of its actions. Blind love can imagine an ultimate end, and it stumbles toward its end in any manner it can. This type of action is usually characterized by suddenness and violence. Indeed, a leaning toward violence is inherent in the chauvinist's being. The chauvinist could no more eliminate violence from his actions than the patriot could add it to his. The chauvinist shows his love flagrantly. He holds it up before his countrymen as an auctioneer holds up his wares before his audience. He is excessively proud of his "great love." The chauvinist is quick to anger, and his anger is aroused at the slightest provocation.

Thus, there are two kinds of people who love their country: the patriot and the chauvinist. The two are closely related, and yet they are infinitely different. The chauvinist, you see, is a blind patriot.

## Rhet as Writ

A person who is staying home from school with an illness is not very sickening.

Identification cards should be checked and those of age should be served.

My father is the sole of benevolence.

I believe Dave is successful because he is very well rounded and highly polished in many areas.

Celtic had little influence on the English Language. It seems that no one ever talked to Celts.

The orchard he gave her fought with her gown so she couldn't ware it.

He was talking very calm and collective to the class about the advantages of vocational agriculture.



Lately the one virtue everyone is admiring in a person is sincerity. No one likes fake or phony people.

The favorite pipe adds that "special something" which gives a man the feeling of being near to something which is very close to him.

The comma is used to separate items in a series instead of a semi-colon because the semi-colon will stop the strain of thought.

*Raison d'entre* (i.e., *raison d'etre*) is a French word meaning entrance of the sun.

An Illini football was quoted running down the spirit here at games.

A phoenix is something you think it is but it isn't.

While riding down a lonely road one night, which curved past a cemetery, a terrifying scene unfolded.

America has one "universal man" who was even more beloved, admired, and infamous than Winston Churchill.

On the Freedom Riders: They would chase and corral these passengers, and then procede to beat them, whip them, or just plain stample them to the ground. The final result was that the Federal Government had to send troops and declare Marshall Law.

For many years my Sunday school teachers and my minister had conditioned my mind to believe in immorality.

Definition of expedient: accelerator.

The purpose of the book was fulfilled as far as I was concerned. An enlightened public emerged from one small book.

## The Contributors

*Jacqueline Vavra*—Riverside-Brookfield

*Jerry Africk*—Oak Ridge, Tennessee

*Violet Juodakis*—St. Teresa Academy, East St. Louis

*Eloise Johnson*—Mattoon

*Tim Flynn*—Culver Military Academy, Culver, Indiana

*Jane Lewis*—Lake Park

*Philip G. Plotica*—Maloney H.S., Meriden, Conn.

*Valerie Lawrence*—Evanston

*Wayne W. Crouch*—Polo

*Sylvia Pikelis*—Kelly, Chicago

*Karen McClallen*—Morton

*Jean Ulrich*—Pekin

*Michael Burnett*—American H.S., Beirut, Lebanon

*Don Shellhamer*—Willowbrook H.S., Villa Park

## The Winners

The following are the winners of the prizes for the best themes  
in the October issue of the Caldron

- First: Preston L. Schiller, *The Seder*  
Second: Joe Miles, *Fresh Water for the World*  
Third: Marilyn Mayer, *The Girl and the Sea*  
Fourth: A tie between Cliff Roti, *Rick Kysowsky*;  
Fifth: Judy Rosenfield, *Crime and Foolishness—in the  
Manner of Fyodor Dostoyevsky*; and  
John Mann, *September 3, 1752*



